

Category Specialist - Nashville, TN

State of Tennessee



JOB SUMMARY

The Category Specialist executes procurement activities, using all available methods to include Request for Proposal, Invitation to Bid, Multi-step Bidding, Competitive Negotiation and Informal Bid, within the assigned portfolio of goods and/or services, and conducts ongoing vendor and contract management during contract lifecycles. The Category Specialist must be able to solve complex problems associated with data and spend analysis, cost benchmarks, diverse and/or conflicting agency requirements, procurement processes, and vendor and contract management. The Category Specialist will administer procurement activities from development and implementation of the sourcing strategy to execution of the contract, which includes identifying agency needs, drafting solicitations, executing procurements, managing and leading the state evaluation process and conducting negotiations. The Category Specialist will represent the state procurement office and speak in public settings to various groups which include, but are not limited to, relevant industry trade groups, the state fiscal review committee, the state procurement commission, the state protest committee and the advisory council on state procurement. In addition, the Category Specialist will serve as the point person for ongoing contract management activities, and will utilize problem solving skills to ensure the contract satisfies the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the direction of the Category Team Lead:

- Gathers and analyzes contract expenditure data.
- Develops contract specific performance metrics.
- Gathers and analyzes benchmarks for pricing and contract terms.
- Develops tools to calculate, forecast, and report savings.
- Develops solicitation specifications based on internal and external sources of information.
- Analyzes proposed pricing against historical costs, other state contracts, and industry-recognized indexes.
- Estimates, validates and reports on annual savings associated with contracts.
- Possesses and demonstrates strong knowledge of policies, procedures and execution strategy for multiple solicitation methods including Request for Proposal, Invitation to Bid, Multi-step Bidding, Competitive Negotiation and Informal Bid.
- Solves common problems associated with procurement activities, including data analysis and negotiations.
- Manages and leads the evaluation team and process to award recommendation.
- Provides protest support in research and development of recommendation for resolution, as needed by the Legal department.
- Works closely with other central procurement teams in support of procurement and contract activities.

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- Leads and develops strategy for formal supplier negotiations and supports other procurement staff with similar activities.
- Monitors vendor market and industry developments to identify appropriate opportunities to maximize cost savings and quality of procured goods or services.
- Conducts regular business reviews with vendor executives to review and discuss vendor performance, contract activities and negotiate contract enhancements and price decreases.
- Conducts ongoing vendor and contract management to ensure vendor and state compliance with contractual obligations.
- Regularly represents the central procurement office while speaking at public events with internal and external stakeholders.
- Builds and manages business relationships with agency procurement staff, central procurement sourcing analysts and key vendors to facilitate effective contract management and sourcing outcomes.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

Completion of a four-year Bachelors degree from an accredited college or university

OR

4 years of purchasing experience

OR

Any combination of the above

ADDITIONAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

Excellent Microsoft Office skills, specifically with Excel.

Excellent organization, problem solving and negotiation skills.

Excellent analytical skills.

Excellent presentation, verbal and written communication skills.

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DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Any combination of the above basic qualifications plus the following:

- Demonstrated skills using Oracle, PeopleSoft 9.1, or other enterprise procurement systems.
- Procurement experience preferred

Only applicants that meet or exceed the basic requirements for this position will be considered. Qualified and Interested candidates should submit the following to chris.salita@tn.gov

- A resume to include a cover letter, college GPA, salary history, and all employers / work experience following college graduation.
- Availability date.

**Requests for ADA accommodation should be directed to the Human Resources Office @ 615-741-1379.*

**The State of Tennessee is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*